

TRANSMITTAL		
[REDACTED]		17 January 1952 DATE
TO: Mr. Becker		
BUILDING	ROOM NO.	
REMARKS:		
<p>I return the attached for appropriate disposition. It is not quite what I intended -- namely, an analysis of the evidence with regard to the Chinese build-up on the Indo-China frontier [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED] However, the analysis has proved useful to me for other purposes. [REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>		
FROM DEPUTY DIRECTOR		
BUILDING	ROOM NO.	EXTENSION
FORM NO. 36-8 SEP 1946		(1299)

ARMY, DOS and DIA review(s) completed.

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/09 : CIA-RDP91T01172R000400130007-8

Substantive
7.6.8

Soviet Strategy Staff, O/CI

2 January 1952

SUMMARY

During the period since 1 July 1951 a number of factors have combined to strengthen Communist capabilities in Indochina; the effects of Chinese Communist training of Viet Minh forces, begun in the summer of 1950, have been noted in abler military tactics; Viet Minh military reorganization and consolidation, begun at about the same time, has been largely completed; improvement of transportation in South China to the Indochina border, begun in 1950, has permitted an increase in military materiel aid from China to the Viet Minh; and Chinese Communist military redistributions within South and Southwest China have increased available strength for intervention. At the same time, French rearmament in Europe and commitments to a European Defense Force have prompted French reexamination of their effort in Indochina and realization that US aid is increasingly essential if even the limited areas of French control are to be held. Correspondingly, with the deterioration of the situations in Burma and Malaya, UK interest in US aid in Southeast Asia has increased. Under such circumstances, French and British appreciations of the military situation in Indochina have tended to shift from confidence to increasing alarm in the face of a real increase in Communist strength and a growing need for US aid.

ARMY, DOS and DIA review(s) completed.

Document No.	009
No Change in Class.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Excluded	
Class. Changed To:	TS S C
Auth:	1.1 10-2
Date:	28 JUL 1978

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/09 : CIA-RDP91T01172R000400130007-8

CHRONOLOGY OF REPORTS CONCERNING INDOCHINA SINCE 1 NOVEMBER 1951

- 1 Nov - French want to limit the German contingent to the European Defense Force to keep it below French strength in Europe (which are limited by Indochina commitments).
- 7 Nov - Chinese Communist press announces the official opening of the Nanning railroad to Chennankuan on the Indochina border.
 - US Consul Blancke in Hanoi finds De Lattre "seriously worried about the Burma menace," says Tonkin is solid, the peril lies westward.
- 10 Nov - French launch Cho Ben offensive; Viet Minh eludes French and refuses battle.
- 11 Nov - French army spokesman in Hanoi stated that Chinese Communist help to the Viet Minh is increasing considerably, reportedly in arms, ammunition, and military equipment, including some trucks and radio equipment. G-2, USA: "It is believed that Chinese Communist material aid to the Viet Minh may have recently increased, but that there were no signs that the Chinese Communists were planning to send combat units or large numbers of volunteers to the aid of the Viet Minh at the present time."
- 18 Nov - G-2 accepts the following CCF O/B: Yunnan - two regular armies certain, one more probable; 8 security divisions, 7 provincial divisions also probable. Kwangsi - five armies certain, one more probable; 33 security regiments. Estimates that there are within 100 miles of the Indochina border 6 armies (150,000 troops) confirmed, 2 armies (50,000) probable; 2 armies (50,000) possible. Estimate that 150,000 of these will be necessary for internal security in China; consider this a reinforcement.
- 21 Nov - Bukit Serene Conference in Malaya discusses defense of Southeast Asia. UK should seek closer understanding with US on Southeast Asian defense.
- 28 Nov - British re Southeast Asian defense problem suggest US-UK confer before mentioning to France.

25X1

- 5 Dec - Viet Minh 304th Division moves into Tonkin from North Annam; G-2 now estimates Viet Minh regular strength in Tonkin at 90,000.
 - G-2 reports large military dump in China along the Nanning-Langson railroad. This line believed to be in operation to a point about 25 miles from the IC border. The number of supply dumps reported, however, has not yet reached the proportion which would normally be expected for an imminent invasion on a large scale.

- [REDACTED]
- 5 Dec - General Cogny, De Lattre's chief of Military Cabinet, tells Heath that De Lattre is still confident that within 15 to 18 months the Viet Minh rebellion could be essentially stamped out, provided the Chinese Communists did not send in troops. The latest figures on Chinese Communist troops concentrated in South China were 250,000 regulars and 120,000 provincial militia in the southern China border region.
- 10 Dec - US Legation, Saigon, forwards "carefully evaluated information" revealing an increase in the Chinese Communist regular forces in the border provinces, particularly Kwangsi; an intensification of work on the roads and railways leading to the Indochina border; and a marked increase in the flow of aid to the Viet Minh, which is reported to include anti-aircraft materiel. USARMA comments: "Current military interior situation in vivid contrast to that same period last year, and provided the Franco-Viet forces were facing only the Viet Minh, could be considered a turning point to victory. The factors of Chinese Communist aid and probable troop assistance of the Viet Minh, however, appear an increasing menace."
- 12 Dec - Viet Minh unsuccessfully attacks Hai Duong, Hoa Binh and Phat Diem.
- 13 Dec - French G-2, Tonkin, says that Viet Minh units forced out of battle by casualties are currently rehabilitated and returned in freshly organized groups in 2-3 weeks with new weapons as a result of Chinese aid.
- [REDACTED]

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/09 : CIA-RDP91T01172R000400130007-8

- 17 Dec - USMA Saigon says he has "confirmed" information that the Chinese Communist 44th Army has moved from Canton to Kwangsi Province, bringing the number of Chinese Communist armies now in Kwangsi and Yunnan to eleven.
- A French Army captain tells Vice Consul, Hanoi, that it was a matter of "absolute fact" that 50 Chinese technicians had been counted with Viet Minh forces opposing his post at Phu Moi.

25X1

- USA, G-2 says the Chinese Communist forces within 150 miles of the Indochina border total 150,000.

25X1

25X1

- 19 Dec - Gen. Linares, Commander in Chief for North Vietnam, tells Blancke that the Viet Minh is getting more aid from the Chinese Communists than he is from the US. Linares evaluated as possibly true reports that Chinese Communist troops were crossing into Indochina in Viet Minh uniforms. He stated that the French had not yet caught any Chinese Communist technicians with the Viet Minh.
- Viet Minh offensive against Hoa Binh area, begun on 10 December, reportedly repulsed with heavy losses.
 - G-2, USA feels that the indications of a Chinese Communist troop and logistical buildup near the Tonkin border and the reports of a Chinese Communist intention to invade Indochina, viewed in the light of a declining Viet Minh capability in relation to the French, point to increased Chinese Communist support of the Viet Minh, possibly including the introduction of volunteers. G-2 raised its estimate of the number of Chinese Communist military advisers with the Viet Minh to 15,000 from 10,000.

25X1

- 26-28 Dec - French Assembly budget debate develops strong opposition to Indochina expenditures.

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/09 : CIA-RDP91T01172R000400130007-8

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/09 : CIA-RDP91T01172R000400130007-8

- 27 Dec - In the fighting in Tonkin from 6 to 19 December, the French estimate that the Viet Minh has suffered 3,600 casualties against French losses of 1,000. Heavy fighting near Hoa Binh and infiltration at many points on the perimeter continues.
- Increasing quantities of weapons and ammunition have been moving southward from the China-Indochina border area during the past seven weeks. French air observers also report the heavy movement of convoys of human carriers behind the front all along the northern Tonkin perimeter, as well as heavy traffic on the Red River.
 - General Linares tells US Consul, Hanoi that France had no indications that a Chinese Communist invasion was imminent, nor could the French believe this was envisaged before the Korean affair was liquidated.
- 28 Dec - French photographs reveal the reconstruction of a railroad bridge over the Namti River near Lao Kay, tending to confirm reports of Chinese Communists attempts to restore the Kunming-Indochina railroad.

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/07/09 : CIA-RDP91T01172R000400130007-8

SUMMARY OF MILITARY AND POLITICAL FACTORS IN INDOCHINA - 1 JULY - 1 NOVEMBER 1951The Military Situation

By the beginning of July, 1951, Viet Minh defeats along the south Tonkin perimeter had compelled a period of rest, regroupment and strengthening of units. The cessation of Viet Minh attacks, together with the onset of the rainy season, precluded any important military clashes in Tonkin throughout the summer. During August and September one artillery division and one additional infantry division were accepted by G-2, Department of the Army, in the Viet Minh O/B, raising the total to 1 artillery and 6 infantry divisions. In September the estimate of overall Viet Minh strength was raised by 10,000 to 130,000 by G-2, USA.

[REDACTED] Reports from all sources stated that an increase in the number of Chinese Communist advisers, observers, technicians and specialists had taken place throughout the summer. By late September, reports were received stating that Viet Minh leaders were planning to resume the offensive, and on 2 October, the first important Viet Minh assault of the fall began in the Nghia Lo area. In spite of rather heavy losses by the attacking Viet Minh units, by the end of October all Viet Minh divisions were showing signs of preparation for major attacks on the Delta Perimeter. From July to October, no significant movement or reinforcement of Chinese Communist units along the Tonkin border was noted by G-2 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] On 19 October, the Chief of French G-2 in Tonkin stated that the only Chinese Communist unit known to be in Tonkin was a transportation unit operating in the border areas north of Hanoi and that Chinese Communist forces in Yunnan and Kwangsi were not especially close to the border and were not deployed in significant concentrations.

The French Attitude Toward A Chinese Communist Invasion

During July and August several French officials in Indochina, particularly General De Lattre, many times expressed fear that conclusion of a truce in Korea would free Chinese Communist troops for action in Indochina. The expression of such fears generally hinged on conclusion of the truce, however, and were never accompanied by any direct evidence that intervention was about to occur. On 19 October, the Chief of French G-2 in Tonkin, stated to the US Consul in Hanoi that he had no reason to think the Chinese Communists were preparing for large scale intervention in Indochina at that time. He thought the Chinese Communist had less reason to attack then than ever before because of their preoccupation with recruitment for the Korean War, the necessity for protecting their lines of communications and the elimination of guerrillas as in South China. Throughout these months, G-2, USA, stated that it had no good evidence that invasion was imminent.

The Political Situation

During the period July-November 1951, the recommendations of the Singapore Conference (15-18 May 1951) for joint strategy for the defense of Southeast Asia encountered difficulties in securing approval by the UK. Both the UK and France expressed the hope of obtaining clear-cut US commitments of aid for Southeast Asia defense plans, and on 29 October the UK recommended a meeting of UK-US-French Chiefs of Staff during the NATO meeting in Rome to work out plans for "outside reinforcements" for executing Singapore Conference recommendations. The US Joint Chiefs of Staff declined this suggestion on 19 November on the grounds that US policy does not provide for commitment of troops to Indochina in the defense of Southeast Asia. The State Department favored discussion of a second line of defense if Indochina should be lost.

In France, during this period, there was considerable discussion of the need to reduce non-European defense commitments if obligations to a European Defense Force were to be met; references were made to the possibility that the Assembly would vote to terminate the military effort in Indochina, which was often characterized as bearing the entire Western burden in the defense of Southeast Asia. A 12 September French note to the US placed the cost of the effort in Indochina at 430 billion francs a year and asked supplementary US aid of 150 billion francs for one year.

In the UK, proposals were made for the participation of Canada, Australia and New Zealand in Southeast Asia defense planning, and suggestions were offered for US-UK discussions on extending the Pacific Pact to Southeast Asia and for far-reaching understanding on other forms of US assistance.